

Naval War College Review

Volume 24
Number 10 *December*

Article 3

1971

The Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff: Conflict in the Budgetary Process. 1947-1971

Lawrence J. Korb

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Korb, Lawrence J. (1971) "The Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff: Conflict in the Budgetary Process. 1947-1971," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 24 : No. 10 , Article 3.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol24/iss10/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

Funding is policy and in no place is this more apparent than in the budgeting process in the Department of Defense. The role perceptions of the Secretary of Defense and role playing by the Joint Chiefs of Staff figure heavily in the process, as does the public and congressional mood in regard to defense spending. It is the interaction of these two phenomena that weighs heavily in the establishment of defense policy.

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF: Conflict in the Budgetary Process, 1947–1971

An article

by

Professor Lawrence J. Korb

INTRODUCTION

The quality and character of policy and the preservation of certain values in the American political system largely depend upon the relationships that exist between and within the branches of Government. In the area of defense policy, one of the most important relationships is the civil-military relationship that exists between the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)—the Secretary's principal military advisers and chiefs of the individual services. There are two reasons why the Secretary-JCS relationship is a potentially important one. These reasons involve both policy and value considerations.

First, the Secretary of Defense has the prime responsibility for exercising control over the Defense Establishment.

However, the enormous size of the

Department of Defense (DOD) makes it impossible for him to effectively direct and administer it alone. The realities of the job require that he delegate substantial decisionmaking authority and many executory functions to the Chiefs, both as a corporate body and as individuals responsible for their respective services. Second, because he lacks military expertise the Secretary must depend upon the JCS for informed opinions. However, should a Secretary allow the military Chiefs to dominate the military decisionmaking process, militarism¹ may result; but, if he does not give their expert testimony its proper weight, poor strategic policy may be the outcome.

Although this civil-military relationship has been potentially important since the establishment of DOD in 1947, its significance has become more critical in the last few years and could

22 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

remain at this high level for the remainder of the decade. The internal and external challenges faced by DOD are unprecedented in their scope and intensity and leave very little margin for error.

The best guide for speculation about the future relationship between the Secretary and the JCS would appear to be an analysis of the relationships that have existed previously. Data available for the period 1947 through 1970—during which 10 men have served as Secretary of Defense and 28 different² men have served on the JCS—should provide the means whereby one can isolate factors that will bear on future relationships. However, an examination of the Secretary-JCS relationships across the entire spectrum of defense activities is too vast an undertaking for one paper, and such an approach might well obscure the real factors that determine it. Therefore, this study will examine the relationship only as it has existed within the budgetary process.

Three considerations weighed heavily in choosing this form of analytical approach. First, the very nature of the budgeting process and the fact that it reoccurs annually provides for comparability. Some Secretaries have been involved in wartime situations, while others were in office during crisis periods, but all had to produce a budget annually. Second, all Secretaries and Chiefs have been unanimous in pointing out the overriding importance of the budgetary phase. There is little disagreement over the fact that in defense "dollars are policy."³ Third, data on the Secretary-JCS relationship during the budgetary phase is more readily available than information on other phases of defense activity.⁴

However, before beginning this analysis of the budgetary process, certain definitions and concepts should be made clear. The budgetary process will be viewed through the conceptual lens

of the Bureaucratic Politics Model.⁵ The Bureaucratic Politics Model, as applied to the defense budgetary process, assumes that the process can be best understood as a game and that the outcome is the result of coalition, compromise, and confusion among players who see different faces in the issues because of the positions that they occupy. Although there are many players in the budgetary game in DOD, this analysis will focus only on a few of them, i.e., the Secretaries and the Chiefs.

The JCS refers to the Chairman, the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Because the Marine Corps budget is usually less than 2 percent of the entire defense budget and less than 5 percent of the budget of the Navy Department, this analysis will not be concerned with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, although he becomes a member of the JCS when matters pertaining to the Marine Corps are discussed.

Members of the JCS wear two hats. As a corporate entity they are the principal military advisers to the Secretary and provide military advice to him. But, as individuals they are the uniformed Chiefs of their services, responsible not only for recommending, but also executing policies. Although these roles are theoretically distinct, in practice they tend to blur, and many times the Secretary will call upon them individually for advice. Therefore, this study will look at the Chiefs interacting with the Secretary in both capacities.

The concept of relationship can be viewed from at least three perspectives. First, an "is" perspective, i.e., relationship may simply refer to the activities performed by each party, e.g., the JCS produces the budget and the Secretary reviews it. Second, a "how" perspective, i.e., the concept may refer to the way or manner in which the two parties interact, e.g., the Secretary and the JCS have

BUDGETARY PROCESS 23

a harmonious relationship. Third, an "ought" perspective, i.e., the concept may refer to the propriety of the activities performed by each party, e.g., the JCS dominated the budgetary process or the JCS were not allowed to make a sufficient budgetary input.

Each of these perspectives is inter-related to some degree, e.g., the activities performed affect the propriety and should have an impact upon the quality. A meaningful and complete analysis of the Secretary-JCS relationship must involve consideration of all three perspectives.

The "is" does not present many difficulties for operationalization. One simply has to catalog the activities performed by each party. The "how" and the "ought" are somewhat more complex. The way in which two parties interact depends not only on what each party does, but upon their mutual expectations and the environment. The propriety of the activities performed involves the question of balance, i.e., an equilibrium between militarism and poor strategic policy. Therefore, in order to abstract the factors that determine the entire Secretary-JCS relationship, this analysis will discuss the activities performed by each party, their mutual expectations, the environment, and the balance produced by those activities.

Finally, this study assumes that for a Secretary to establish a meaningful relationship with the JCS in the budgetary process, he must deal with them on fiscal matters for at least 18 months. This time period allows the Secretary to participate in substantial parts of at least two budgets.⁶ The Secretaries who meet this minimum requirement are James Forrestal and Louis Johnson from the Truman administration; Charles Wilson and Neil McElroy from the Eisenhower era; Robert McNamara, who served both Kennedy and Johnson; and Melvin Laird, the present Secretary.

The tenure of these six men accounts

for 80 percent of the period since the creation of the position in 1947.⁷

TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

The first two Secretaries, James Forrestal and Louis Johnson, each served about 18 months in office, and while the environment in which each worked was almost identical, their relationship with the JCS was quite different. The period from the establishment of the Department of Defense, in August 1947, to the outbreak of the Korean war in June 1950 was dominated by three factors. First, the defense budget rapidly declined from a World War II high of \$80 billion to \$10.5 billion in FY 1948. Second, there was a tremendous amount of bitterness between the military services caused by the 3-year unification controversy (1944-47), the differing views over the course of future conflicts, and the competition for the scarce resources. Third, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union were becoming increasingly bellicose as a result of events in Berlin, Eastern Europe, and mainland China.

Secretary Forrestal

The Budget Process. James Forrestal worked with five military chiefs on two budgetary evolutions—a supplement to FY 1949 budget and the FY 1950 budget. In each of these operations, Forrestal and the Chiefs played similar roles. The Secretary of Defense received definite ceilings from the Bureau of the Budget. He communicated these ceilings to the JCS and asked them to produce a budget within these ceilings.

The Chiefs submitted budgets to him that were well in excess of the ceiling because they could not agree on where to reduce the individual service budgets. Each Chief was willing to cut the total package if the majority of the cuts came

24 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

from the other services. Their budget submissions to Forrestal were simply the addition of the three individual service budgets. In FY 1949 the Chiefs asked for a \$9 billion supplement⁸ and in FY 1950 they requested a total budget of \$29.4 billion.⁹ The ceilings for the FY 1949 supplement and the subsequent year's budget were \$3 billion and \$15 billion, respectively.

Forrestal sought assistance from two outside sources to bridge the gap. One was a board of non-JCS officers that he created to reduce the budget, but it made only a small reduction. He then asked the Secretary of State to provide guidance to the JCS to enable them to adjust service budgets in light of the world situation with the goal of remaining below administration ceilings, but Secretary Marshall refused.

Forrestal succeeded in bridging the gap through personal diplomacy. He summoned the Chiefs to his office and acknowledged that they could not have satisfactory and usable military power under the budgetary limitations, but that if they would produce a budget in the vicinity of the President's ceilings, he would make further attempts to get the President to raise the existing limitations. For Forrestal to present the Chiefs' original estimations to the administration would strain both his and their credibility.¹⁰ The Chiefs cooperated, but the White House did not. In FY 1949 the Chiefs and Forrestal agreed on a \$3.48 billion supplement, and in FY 1950 they settled on \$16.9.¹¹ Forrestal made impassioned pleas to the White House, but Truman refused to raise the ceilings.

The Relationship. Although there was no prior experience concerning the role that the JCS would play in the budget process and the 1947 legislation was vague on the subject, Forrestal's perception of the appropriate role for the Chiefs was quite clear. He expected them to advise him on the division of

funds within the limitations of the President's ceilings and thus share responsibility with him for the division.¹²

Forrestal was equally clear about his own role. He viewed himself as a mediator between both the administration and the military services, trying to bridge the gap between what was needed and what could be had, and between the services, attempting to ensure that the final budget produced a balanced force.

The JCS were primarily service oriented. They viewed their primary responsibility as protecting the interests of their own branch. They realized that defense spending was limited but felt that they could not take responsibility for any reductions that might involve their service. If cuts had to be made, the Chiefs favored letting the other services bear the brunt or "passing the buck" upwards.¹³

The JCS viewed the first Secretary of Defense as a superservice Secretary—just as the service Secretaries are supposed to be spokesmen for their individual services, the Chiefs of Staff thought the Secretary of Defense should obtain more money for defense and safeguard the vested interests of their particular services even if the money was not available.¹⁴ If one examines the public statements of the Chiefs during Forrestal's tenure, one would have to conclude that their relationship with the Secretary was bitter. Air Force Chiefs of Staff Spaatz and Vandenberg argued against Forrestal's balanced force concept and urged Congress to give the Air Force 15 additional air groups.¹⁵ Army Chief of Staff Bradley urged Congress to do away with the funds that Forrestal had provided for naval aviation.¹⁶

However, this was not the case. The Chiefs were merely trying to protect their service interests and their own standing within their services. They did not feel that they were being disloyal to Forrestal. In fact they had a great deal

of respect for the Secretary and appreciated his attempts to increase defense spending by taking their case to the White House.¹⁷

The Secretary-JCS relationship would have to be characterized as balanced. Both the Chiefs and the Secretary were aware of the other's positions; they worked out their differences within the limitations imposed by the White House; neither the JCS, as a corporate body, nor the individual services dominated the policymaking process; the final budget produced a balanced force in which each service received some, but not all, of their demands; and the final budget was a result of the joint efforts of the Chiefs and the Secretary.

Louis Johnson

The Budget Process. Louis Johnson assumed the helm at the Pentagon while Congress was hearing testimony on the FY 1950 budget and the JCS were working on a statement of forces and major national requirements that would provide a foundation for a FY 1951 budget of less than \$15 billion. Johnson did not wait long to make his impact felt on either budget.

Within a few weeks of his appointment, he boasted to the Senate Subcommittee on Military Appropriations that he could save a billion dollars in DOD by cutting out waste, duplications, and unnecessary civilian employment. Obviously impressed, the Senate gave him authority to reduce expenditures by \$434 million.¹⁸

Within a month after succeeding Forrestal—on 23 April 1949, and less than a week after the Navy had completed well-publicized keel laying ceremonies—Johnson canceled construction of the 65,000-ton flush deck supercarrier, the *United States*.¹⁹ This was done despite the fact that the Navy already had about \$1 billion invested in it and Congress had appropriated funds for the

ship for 3 consecutive fiscal years.

In June the Budget Director informed the Secretary that the budgetary ceiling for FY 1951 would be \$1.5 billion less than FY 1950 of \$13.5 billion.²⁰ Without asking the services for the implications of this development for their programs, Johnson then ordered a reduction in FY 1950 expenditures of approximately \$1 billion and directed the JCS to agree on a budget for FY 1951 below \$13.5 billion or face the prospect of an across-the-board reduction by him.

On two occasions during the summer of 1949, President Truman met with Johnson and the Chiefs to discuss the adequacy of the ceiling. On both occasions the Secretary and the Chiefs assured the President that \$13.5 billion was more than sufficient.²¹

The service budgets which the Chiefs submitted to Johnson amounted to \$13.31 billion. Johnson cut another \$120 million from the budget and sent it to the White House. The Bureau of the Budget reduced this figure by another \$1 billion, and Johnson accepted the final figure of \$12.21 billion with very little argument.

The Relationship. There is little doubt about the role that Johnson perceived for himself. His primary job was to bring about economy in the Pentagon. Johnson saw himself as the President's representative to DOD, enforcing the administration's will on an avaricious military. Johnson would not think of attempting to get the White House to raise the budget ceilings, but he took advantage of every opportunity to reduce spending levels in the Pentagon—an example being the time he seized upon a technicality to split the JCS and cancel the supercarrier.

Johnson's conception of the appropriate role for the JCS followed from the conception of his own job. He expected the Chiefs to divide up the funds voluntarily, within the ceilings

26 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

imposed from above. If the Chiefs could not get together voluntarily, Johnson felt that this was their problem. He would capitalize on their disagreements and reduce expenditures, or he would simply order across-the-board cuts.²²

To understand the Chiefs' perceptions and their relationship with Johnson, it must be kept in mind that first Truman and then Johnson put "the fear of God" into them.²³ Truman informed the Chiefs that he expected them to support his budgetary ceilings publicly and privately. If they did not agree with his policies, they ought to resign.²⁴ Johnson's testimony to Congress about waste in the Pentagon, his order to reduce defense spending, and the cancellation of the supercarrier and subsequent replacement of Admiral Denfeld demonstrated to the Chiefs that they would have to be "team members" or lose both control over funds and their positions.

The effect of Truman's and Johnson's activities on JCS activities was amply demonstrated by their failure to question the budgetary ceilings in two meetings with Truman and their testimony to Congress on the FY 1951 budget. Army General Collins actually tried to demonstrate to Congress that the Army contributed more to the Nation's security with less men.²⁵ Chairman Bradley told Congress that the military would be doing a disservice to the country if they recommended higher defense budgets.²⁶

So much of a team man did CNO Louis Denfeld become that he lost control of the Navy. When Johnson canceled the *United States* Denfeld accepted the decision and tried to mediate between the Navy and the Secretary. His admirals could accept neither the cancellation decision nor the attitude of Denfeld and revolted against him.²⁷

So much did the entire JCS become "team members" of the Truman administration that they lost their status as military experts in the eyes of many

observers. This led to a demand by congressional Republicans that Eisenhower immediately replace the entire JCS when he assumed office.²⁸

The Secretary-JCS relationship during this period tilted the civil-military balance in a nonmilitary direction. Rather than presenting the administration and the Congress with a military perspective, the Chiefs advocated a view of defense policy based primarily on an economic perspective. The disequilibrium of the situation was aptly summed up by George Mahon, (D-Tex.), Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Military Appropriations, who, after listening to the FY 1951 testimony of the Chiefs, stated that he could not understand how so-called military experts could recommend a budget for FY 1951 that was substantially lower than FY 1950 when, in the interim, there had been "a complete loss of China and Russia has exploded an atomic bomb."²⁹

THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

Two of Eisenhower's appointees as Secretary of Defense, Charles Wilson and Neil McElroy, lasted at least 18 months in office. The President's third appointee, Thomas Gates, left office with the Republican administration in January 1960 after only 13 months.³⁰

During the tenure of Wilson and McElroy, a great many changes took place at home and abroad. For the purpose of strengthening the Secretary vis-a-vis the JCS, DOD was reorganized in 1953 and 1958. The Korean war ended, and a "new look" at military strategy produced a policy of massive retaliation. The "great equation"³¹ replaced Truman's budgetary ceilings. Joseph Stalin died and the cold war was succeeded by "peaceful" coexistence. The Soviet Union developed an H-bomb well ahead of schedule and was first in the race into space.

Wilson remained in office longer than any previous Secretary, 56 months, and McElroy lasted 26 months. The General Motors executive was responsible for six budgets, and the Proctor and Gamble president produced two. Both of the former corporation executives had similar styles, and their relationships with the JCS were quite alike.

As a group, the JCS that served with Wilson and McElroy were probably the most colorful, controversial, independent, outspoken, and least cooperative collection of military leaders in American history. The Eisenhower Chiefs so exasperated the former five-star general that he accused them of legalized insubordination.³²

The Budget Process. The production of the defense budget within the executive under Eisenhower usually took an entire calendar year.³³ The process was initiated about 18 months before the fiscal year in which the budget was to be effective and 12 months before the budget was to be submitted to the Congress. For example, work on the FY 1957 budget, which was to be submitted to Congress in January 1956 and which would become effective on 1 July 1956, began in January 1955 and lasted until December of that year.

The process was inaugurated in January when the National Security Council (NSC) produced the Basic National Security Policy (BNSP) document. This document was supposed to be a comprehensive statement of American strategic policy and had as one of its main purposes providing guidance for the JCS in their planning for force and weapon levels.

Although the NSC devoted a great deal of time and energy to the drafting of the BNSP, the document was useless for budgeting purposes. Rather than resolving the sharp differences of opinion over what the strategic policy of the United States should be, it glossed over them to make the docu-

ment acceptable to all parties. It meant all things to all men and settled nothing. For example, the 1958 edition stated that the United States would depend upon the weapons of mass retaliation, but at the same time maintain flexible forces capable of coping with a lesser situation.³⁴

After completion, the BNSP document was sent to the JCS to serve as a guide for their Joint Strategic Operations Plan (JSOP). The JSOP is a document of many volumes that prescribes the forces that the JCS believe are required to carry out military strategy and national objectives. Because the BNSP document could be interpreted in so many ways, each service Chief stressed that portion of the BNSP that enhanced the primary mission of his service. Consequently, the JSOP was really three separate plans added together and called a joint plan.³⁵

Secretary of Defense Wilson tried on several occasions to get the JCS to produce a joint plan, but to no avail. Consequently, he was forced to rely on Admiral Radford, the Chairman of the JCS, and his own staff (OSD) for most of the force level planning. On one occasion he even produced his own long-range plan for force levels.³⁶

The completed JSOP was sent to the services in late June. It was supposed to serve as a guide, or framework, for the individual military departments in the production of their separate budgets.

While the JCS were completing work on the JSOP, the NSC was deciding upon a ceiling for defense expenditures for the next fiscal year. The ceiling was obtained by estimating total income, subtracting the projected expenditures of all other Government agencies, and then allocating the remainder to defense.³⁷ The objective was a balanced budget every fiscal year, and not even such crises as sputnik or Suez could alter that fact.³⁸ The remainder for defense usually came out to between 9 and 10 percent of the gross national

28 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

product. The defense ceiling was transmitted to the service Chiefs by the Chairman in midsummer.

The individual service budgets were submitted to the JCS in September. The JCS were supposed to review the budgets for conformity with the BNSP document and the JSOP. The Secretary expected the Chiefs to produce a total defense budget which conformed as closely as possible to the plans but did not exceed the ceiling.

However, the service budgets exceeded the ceiling by an average of 15 percent.³⁹ Not once did these JCS budgets come reasonably close to the ceiling. On three occasions the budget requests exceeded the ceiling by more than 20 percent, and the JCS refused to trim the budgets. Because of the vagueness of the BNSP and the ambivalence of the JSOP, the Chiefs could and did justify every item in the service budgets and refused to make reductions on the grounds of national security. Moreover, there was still a great deal of bitterness among the services and any attempt by a service Chief to acquiesce in cuts for his service would be looked upon as near treason by his subordinates. Wilson and McElroy tried a variety of approaches to induce the JCS to scale down their budget requests. These approaches ranged from direct commands to subtle hints, but all were equally ineffective. In Eisenhower's first year in office, Wilson twice directed the JCS to indicate where reductions could be made in the services' \$37.82 billion request to bring it under \$35 billion. The JCS refused to follow either directive on the grounds that any reductions would increase the danger to national security.⁴⁰

The following year Wilson directed Chairman Arthur Radford to persuade the Chiefs to make the desired reductions. Radford was unable to get the Chiefs to agree on a lower level of expenditures and was forced to make

the recommendations for reductions himself.⁴¹

In 1958, when he was faced with a JCS-approved budget of \$44.67 billion and an administration ceiling of \$38 billion, Secretary Neil McElroy tried a more subtle approach. He asked the Chiefs how they would divide up \$38 billion without in any way implying that this was the amount they approved. The JCS discussed this hypothetical question briefly and then informed McElroy that they unanimously agreed on how to split up \$34 billion, but each Chief felt he needed the additional \$4 billion for his own service and could not voluntarily give it away to another military department.⁴² In essence, they were telling the Secretary that they needed the entire \$45 billion.

In 1959 Eisenhower intervened personally by inviting the Chiefs to a stag dinner at the White House. During the dinner the former general gave the Chiefs a pep talk on the great need for more cooperation on their part with the Secretary in connection with the budget. Only Chairman Twining was receptive. The service Chiefs refused to change their behavior.⁴³

So little did the JCS have to do with the final defense budget that they never even considered such important questions as the size of the Army, the number of aircraft carriers, or the amount of deterrent forces.⁴⁴ The job of making such important decisions, such as where to make the major reductions, was left to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the President. Wilson and McElroy often ordered across-the-board reductions. DOD's comptroller Wilfred McNeil made most of the detailed decisions.⁴⁵ Eisenhower made about 15 major budgetary decisions annually and was the chief architect of the plan for reducing the Army's ground forces.⁴⁶

The Relationship. Both Secretary Wilson and McElroy had similar

conceptions of their positions. They wanted to manage, but not make, military policy. They desired to concentrate their energies on increasing efficiency and savings in the Pentagon.⁴⁷ Likewise, Wilson and McElroy envisioned similar roles for the Chiefs. They expected the Chiefs to cooperate fully with OSD and to act with them as a single staff for the Secretary of Defense. The Secretaries did not want purely military advice from the Chiefs. Wilson and McElroy expected the JCS to broaden their outlooks to include a wide range of domestic and international economic and political factors.⁴⁸

In their dealings with the Chiefs, they expected the Chairman of the JCS to serve as a "go-between," bridging the gap between administration policy and military demands. While the Secretaries themselves did not want to take the military's case to the White House, they were more than willing to give the Chiefs ample opportunity to do so and were content with situations in which the Chiefs' views prevailed.⁴⁹

The majority of the service Chiefs felt that their primary duties were to provide military advice and to protect the vested interests of their services. The Chiefs felt that neither their military professionalism nor their service interests could be very well protected by taking into account political and economic criteria. The service Chiefs looked to the Secretary of Defense to protect military spending and defense programs from the economy minded members of the administration.⁵⁰

Chairman Arthur Radford saw himself as an active participant in the policymaking process, trying to persuade both the administration and his fellow Chiefs on certain matters. However, since he was in sympathy with the "great equation" and massive retaliation, most of his persuading was saved for the Chiefs.⁵¹

His successor, Nathan Twining, saw

himself as a conveyor between the Chiefs and the Secretary.⁵² He did not want to attempt to persuade his fellow Chiefs to go along with any point of view or to press their views upon the administration.

The Secretary-JCS relationship was turbulent but harmonious. Wilson and McElroy were clearly annoyed by the JCS refusal to be team members and their subsequent public statements criticizing the administration.⁵³ However, they never prevented the Chiefs from presenting their views to key officials in the executive branch and never brought pressure upon the Chiefs to change their ways.⁵⁴ The JCS, for their part, were not happy with the strategic policy or the budget ceilings. However, their resentment was not directed against Wilson and McElroy personally because they realized that responsibility for those decisions lay outside the Office of the Secretary. One Chief, even today, refers to Secretary Wilson as a "great American."⁵⁵

The Secretary-JCS relationship in the Eisenhower administration did not produce a situation in which civil and military considerations were unbalanced. Despite pressure from the administration, the service Chiefs refused to allow economic and political considerations to dilute their military recommendations. JCS positions were given a full hearing within the administration, and there were no barriers placed in the way of the Chiefs informing the Congress of their feelings.

Even though the Chiefs opted out of the budget process at an early stage, the military position was not ignored. Wilson and McElroy relied upon their chairman for advice. Comptroller Wilfred McNeil consulted service officials individually when making the detailed reductions, and the final budget was closely scrutinized by a former general and Army Chief of Staff.

Despite the publicity generated by the public statements and congressional

30 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

testimony of the JCS,⁵⁶ there is no evidence that they succeeded in raising the level of defense expenditures. Congress listened sympathetically but refused to take responsibility for increasing the defense budget,⁵⁷ and a President, who was well aware of the dangers of the military-industrial complex, held the line on spending despite pressure from the Chiefs and their partisans in the Congress and the Nation.⁵⁸

If, as many have agreed, the Eisenhower administration did produce poor strategic policy, the fault does not seem to lie with the Secretary-JCS relationship. The National Security Council and the intra-JCS relationship would appear to be more likely candidates for blame.

KENNEDY AND JOHNSON— "THE McNAMARA YEARS"

Before assuming the Presidency, John Kennedy appointed a committee, headed by Senator Stuart Symington, former Secretary of the Air Force, to study defense organization for the purpose of recommending needed changes. After 2 months of study the Symington committee proposed a radical reorganization of DOD. However, when Robert McNamara accepted Kennedy's offer to become the eighth Secretary of Defense, he persuaded the President-elect to postpone the subject of reorganization until he (McNamara) could assess the situation personally. Nevertheless, Kennedy did give McNamara two directives: first, develop the military structure required for a firm foundation for our foreign policy without regard to budget ceilings; second, operate this force at the lowest possible price.⁵⁹

Armed only with those two directives and without benefit of any new legislation, McNamara made so many changes, both formal and informal, organizational and procedural, that he brought about not just a reorganization, but a revolution in DOD. Nowhere was this revolution more acutely felt than in

the budget process where the eighth Secretary of Defense introduced the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System (PPBS) and cost effectiveness or systems analysis.⁶⁰

The Budget Process. PPBS divided the budgetary process into three clearly defined cycles and lengthened it to 18 months. Thus, preparation of the FY 1966 budget, which was to be submitted to the Congress in January 1965 and was to become effective in July 1965; got underway in July 1963. Cost effectiveness or systems analysis, a technique that looks at alternate ways of performing a job, became the backbone of the budget making process.

The foundation for PPBS in DOD from 1961 through 1968 was the Five Year Defense Plan (FYDP). This document was the master plan for the budget process and contained the programs approved by OSD with their estimated costs projected for 5 years. The initial FYDP was produced in 1961 and projected programs and costs through 1965. Each year the FYDP was updated by decisions made during the budget process.

The planning cycle was the first and longest. It began in July and lasted until February and was composed of three steps. The first step involved production of volume 1 of the JSOP by the JCS. This volume was an assessment of the military threat facing the United States and of our national commitments projected for 5 years.

For about 5 years the JCS devoted a great deal of the time and energy to producing this part of the JSOP. Since there was no BNSP document, the Chiefs hoped that their estimates would furnish the basis for all subsequent budgetary decisions. They hoped to make it a substitute for the BNSP.⁶¹

However, by 1965 the JCS realized that the JSOP had little impact on subsequent budget decisions. In fact, they wondered if anyone even read it.

Thus, they began to spend less and less time on it and by 1967 had turned the job over to their subordinates.⁶²

While the JCS were working on the first part of the JSOP, McNamara often assigned special projects to the Chiefs. These projects consisted of a set of specific questions, had very short deadlines, and had great potential implications for the budget. For example, in March 1961 McNamara asked the Chiefs to estimate how many bombers the United States would need in the next decade and set a deadline of 6 weeks.⁶³

The career officials, e.g., JCS, complained a great deal about these short deadlines, but always completed the studies on time. OSD usually found the studies of the career officials lacking in many respects.⁶⁴ From 1961 through 1965, OSD usually was content with pointing out the inconsistencies in these studies. But from 1965 onwards, when the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense, Systems Analysis (SA), was established within OSD, SA began to make recommendations of its own, and these were usually accepted by the Secretary.⁶⁵

The second step of the planning cycle consisted of the submission of force level recommendations by the services and unified commands to the JCS. These recommendations were to be based upon the threat and commitments outlined in volume I of the JSOP.

The third and final step of the planning cycle involved the completion of two major documents. The JCS completed volume II of the JSOP. This part recommended the optimum force levels necessary to meet U.S. requirements. Although the force levels were supposed to be based on the advice of both the services and unified commanders, the JCS rarely paid attention to the latter's ideas, and volume II was based primarily upon service inputs. The Chiefs ignored the unified commanders' requests because they were unrealistic and because the JCS were wary of losing

any power to these men, who were theoretically their equals.⁶⁶

While the JCS were completing the JSOP, OSD produced a Major Program Memorandum (MPM) for each of the 10 mission areas and support activities of the defense budget. These memoranda summarized the OSD position on the major force levels, the rationale for choices among alternatives, and the recommended force levels and funding. Although the MPM were in theory programming documents based upon the planning in the JSOP, their authors, in fact, ignored the JSOP, and the MPM became both planning and programming documents.⁶⁷

The programming cycle began with the Secretary's receipt of the JSOP and MPM. This cycle lasted about 6 months, i.e., through the end of August.

McNamara normally reviewed these documents for about 30 days and then provided guidance to the services for preparing Program Change Requests (PCR), i.e., suggested modifications to the Five Year Defense Plan. The primary factor shaping this guidance was the Major Program Memorandum.

The services normally submitted about 300 PCR's annually to the Office of Systems Analysis, whose decisions were nearly always negative. The rejection of the PCR's was attributable to three factors: the services used poor analytical techniques, their requests did not convey any sense of priority in relation to the base program and their cost.⁶⁸

Theoretically all the program decisions should have been made before budgeting began, but this was not the case. Many of the program decisions were negotiated during and after the budgetary cycle.⁶⁹ An OSD official reported that in FY 1968 and FY 1969, 90 percent of the final program decision documents were not written until after 28 December, i.e., after the conclusion of the budgetary cycle.⁷⁰

32 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

While Systems Analysis was reviewing the PCR's, the JCS were reviewing the MPM. The Chiefs' comments on the memoranda were sent to the Secretary in July. For the remainder of the summer, McNamara and the JCS met about 15 times to discuss the Chiefs' adverse comments.

From 1961 through 1965 the JCS were never united on the major issues raised in the MPM. The Navy objected to the B-70; the Army opposed a 15 carrier fleet; and the Air Force was less than enthusiastic about ABM. In their meetings McNamara was able to capitalize on these differences and skillfully played one service off against another.⁷¹

However, from 1966 onward, the JCS worked out their differences prior to meeting with the Secretary and presented a united front to him. For example, the Air Force wanted 35 wings of tactical aircraft and the Navy 17 carriers. Prior to meeting McNamara they agreed on 29 wings and 15 carriers. Similar negotiations were conducted on the ABM.⁷²

The Chiefs realized early that McNamara was dividing and conquering but were not able to work out their differences until Taylor stepped down as Chairman and LeMay no longer served as Air Force Chief of Staff. Taylor was regarded as an administration man, and LeMay was an uncompromising crusader for airpower. General Wheeler, Taylor's successor as Chairman, refused to bring split opinions to McNamara. He would tell the other Chiefs that he would wait until they came to some agreement before adjourning their meetings.⁷³

This united front eventually paid off for the JCS. When they were divided, McNamara could carry the day by pointing out the division to the President and Congress. But even McNamara was hesitant about overruling a united or common professional military opinion.⁷⁴ Consequently, such items as

a nuclear carrier and the ABM, which the Secretary opposed for about 5 years, were eventually approved.

The budgetary cycle officially began in September when the services were asked to prepare their budgets in the traditional categories—that is each service separately rather than in program packages, for submission to OSD by 1 October. In issuing this call for budget submissions, McNamara emphatically pointed out, year after year, that the services were not to feel bound by any budgetary ceiling, real or imagined. They were to be guided only by decisions made in regard to the Major Program Memoranda and Program Change Requests. The Secretary repeatedly stated that this country could afford whatever was necessary for defense.⁷⁵ Theoretically, the budgetary cycle was to consist only of costing out approved programs.

Despite McNamara's rhetoric, the JCS had a very good idea of what the total and individual service budgets would be. Sometimes the Comptroller let the service Chiefs know as early as July. On most occasions it was a simple matter of arithmetic. It was more than a mere coincidence that what this country could afford for defense from FY 1963 through FY 1966, i.e., before the Vietnam buildup, came within 1 percent of \$46 billion each year and that the Army, Navy, and Air Force shares of the budget remained the same as under Eisenhower, a fairly constant 27, 32, and 41 percent, respectively.⁷⁶ A service Chief, who served under Eisenhower and McNamara, said that in regard to budget ceilings there was no real difference between either administration.⁷⁷ Another Chief remarked, "Weapon systems became more and more difficult to justify as we approached our portion of \$46 billion."⁷⁸

Any lingering doubts about a budget ceiling in DOD were shattered during

the Vietnam buildup when McNamara directed the services to delete programs that were not urgent, to assume for budgetary purposes that the war would be over by the end of the fiscal year and that during the year there would be no increase in the level of our commitment to Vietnam, and to stretch out maintenance and repair cycles by about 50 percent.⁷⁹ These directives made it necessary to have four consecutive supplemental budgets from FY 1966 through FY 1969 and caused the JCS to contemplate resigning en masse,⁸⁰ thus destroying McNamara's credibility with Johnson, and eventually contributing to McNamara's firing.⁸¹

From 1961 through 1965 the service budget requests exceeded the amount eventually approved by about 10 percent. However, from 1966 through 1968, as McNamara's standing within the administration waned, the gap between the amount requested and amount granted widened enormously. According to DOD figures, FY 1967 requests exceeded the actual budget allowed by 19 percent, in FY 1968 by over 28 percent, and in FY 1969 by over 30 percent.

From October through December the Comptroller's office reviewed these budgets. In its review the office normally initiated some 600 subject issues, areas of potential savings. Although these issues were theoretically technical—for instance, the cost of a submarine or the cost of equipping an infantry battalion—the issues reflected intuitive feelings on the part of the personnel in the Comptroller's office about where they felt cuts ought to be made.⁸² McNamara reviewed the budgets personally and, with the subject issues as a guide, made about 700 budgetary decisions annually. Often his decisions concerned the smallest matters, e.g., the color of belt buckles. During his review McNamara consulted with the JCS about 20 times. These consultations took place on the Secretary's terms.

McNamara never allowed the Chiefs to review the budget as a whole but only asked them to comment on items individually. He was not interested in whether the Chiefs preferred x or y, only their opinion of x. In deliberating about x, the Chiefs never knew if he would ask about y.⁸³

The executive phase of the budgetary cycle concluded in late December when the President met with the Secretary and the JCS for about 4 hours. Despite vigorous opposition on the part of many members of the JCS during their "days in court," the President invariably sided with McNamara. Some of the issues raised in these meetings included the B-70, number of Polaris submarines, and pilot shortages.

The Relationship. Robert McNamara had very definite ideas about what he was supposed to do in the Pentagon. His role conception had two dimensions. First, McNamara described himself as an active manager providing aggressive leadership—questioning, suggesting alternatives, proposing objectives, and stimulating progress.⁸⁴ Second, the eighth Secretary of Defense desired to eliminate waste, unnecessary duplication, and needless goldplating in DOD.⁸⁵

McNamara expected the JCS to be more than military advisers. He wanted them to incorporate economic criteria into their traditional military requirement studies. Advice based on purely military judgment was useless in his eyes.⁸⁶

The Secretary viewed the JCS as one of the many resources available to him to be used on his terms. The Chiefs were no more or no less important than any of his other advisers. The ability of the JCS to influence policy was dependent upon the quality of their advice, not their position as his principal military advisers.

McNamara expected the Chiefs to be satisfied with the increased level of defense spending and to accept his

34 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

innovations as "more rational" than previous methods. Once he had reached a decision, the Secretary expected the Chiefs to support it, even if they opposed the rationale for the decision. Those who did not would be treated like other appointed subordinates.⁸⁷

By the 1960's a new crop of military leaders were moving to the forefront. The gladiators of World War II had for the most part retired.⁸⁸ This new crop of leaders were primarily staff men, planners and administrators, more at home behind a desk than in the field. As a group they generally exhibited two characteristics. First, they viewed themselves as professionals and were very serious about maintaining the integrity of that professionalism.⁸⁹ Second, they felt that the primary responsibility of members of the JCS was more toward the corporate entity than the service.⁹⁰

These leaders expected three things from the Secretary: first, that he solicit their military perspective on all important decisions; second, that he transmit or allow them to transmit that perspective to the administration and the Congress; and third, that he respect the integrity of their professionalism. The Chiefs felt that the following types of activities represented attempts to undermine their professionalism: attempts to persuade them to take economic and political factors into their deliberations; pressure to rubber stamp decisions that the Chiefs had no part in making or with which they disagreed; overruling the JCS on military grounds; exacting retribution on a Chief or his service for maintaining a certain viewpoint; seeking to play one service off against another; and maintaining that the military can have "whatever is necessary" and can be justified as such, there is no ceiling on defense expenditures.⁹¹

Within a short time after McNamara had become Secretary of Defense, many people were complaining that he had upset the civil-military balance. These people claimed that military men and

military considerations were not playing a sufficient part in the making of defense policy—that is, the civilian leadership in DOD was bypassing the JCS on too many occasions, virtually dictating military planning on others, and preventing the Chiefs from advising the Congress.⁹²

There is no doubt that the Secretary-JCS relations were anything but harmonious. The Chiefs felt that McNamara was undermining their professional integrity in nearly every conceivable way. The Secretary thought that he was controlling the military and making decisions in the most rational, scientific, and unbiased way possible.

However, it is difficult to say that civil-military relations were unbalanced under McNamara. Civilians made the decisions and military advice was available. It was not that the administration did not know how the military felt. Rather, they chose to make decisions on other criteria.

Moreover, despite pressure from McNamara, the military leaders made known their views to the Congress. In the early years of McNamara's tenure, Anderson and LeMay made Congress aware of their feelings about McNamara's method, and in the latter part of his administration even the Chairman of the JCS joined his colleagues in opposing McNamara on certain issues.

Initially McNamara was able to capitalize on splits within the JCS, but within a few years the Chiefs had remedied that situation. At the beginning of his term, the Secretary was able to remove at least one Chief, but Congress soon mandated a fixed 4-year term.⁹³ In the end, McNamara himself was removed, and what was possibly his most important decision, not to deploy the ABM, was reversed.

NIXON ADMINISTRATION

Melvin Laird, who had observed McNamara's revolution from his seat on

the House Subcommittee on Military Appropriations, felt that McNamara's methods had led to overcentralization in decisionmaking.⁹⁴ Accordingly, when he became the 10th Secretary of Defense, Laird instituted certain changes in the defense budget process to redress this situation. The essence of these changes was contained in a "treaty" signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the service Secretaries, and the Chairman of the JCS. This treaty, "negotiated" soon after Laird assumed the helm at the Pentagon, provided that the Secretary of Defense would look to the services and the JCS in the design of forces and that the Systems Analysis Office would limit itself to evaluation and review and not put forward independent proposals of its own. In return for this concession the Secretary of Defense expected the services to work within the ever-decreasing budget ceilings.⁹⁵

The Budget Process. The length of the process is still about 18 months, the foundation is still the Five Year Defense Plan, and it includes many of the same steps as McNamara's, but as the "treaty" indicates, the emphasis is different.⁹⁶ The JCS inaugurate the planning cycle by producing volume I of the JSOP, the strategic assessment, and sending it to Laird. The Secretary reviews the JSOP and then issues a coordinated, complete, and current strategic guidance document for the entire defense community, the Strategic Guidance Memorandum (SGM). This document is essentially the JSOP with some updating and enlargement and is issued in January, e.g., the SGM for FY 1972 was issued in January 1970.

In January the Secretary also issues a tentative Fiscal Guidance Memorandum (FGM), projecting dollar constraints for the next 5 years. While the elements of DOD are reviewing the tentative FGM, the JCS complete the force structure portion of the JSOP, i.e., volume II.

This is prepared from a purely military perspective, i.e., without regard to the fiscal constraints of the tentative FGM.

The Secretary reviews the comments on the tentative FGM and volume II of the JSOP and then completes the planning cycle by issuing a Fiscal Guidance Memorandum (FGM) in March. The FGM sets definite ceilings on the total budget and on each service. In Laird's three budgets the FGM has set a figure of from \$70 to \$75 billion and split the figure evenly among the three services.⁹⁷

The ceilings for the FGM are a product of the Defense Program Review Committee (DPRC), a subcommittee within the National Security Council system composed of the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Undersecretary of State, the Chairman of the JCS, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Chairman of the President's Council on Economic Advisers. The task of this committee is to anticipate the political, economic, and social implications resulting from changes in defense spending, budgeting, and force levels.⁹⁸

This body was created in October 1969 and has become involved in the FY 1971 and 1972 budgets. The ceilings that it produces have been guided by a desire to balance the budget and an anticipation of how much Congress will allocate for defense. The ceiling for FY 1971 was \$75 billion and for FY 1972 it was \$70 billion.⁹⁹

The programming cycle begins in April when the JCS draw up a Joint Force Memorandum (JFM), which presents the Chiefs' recommendations on force levels and support programs that can be provided within the fiscal constraints of the Fiscal Guidance Memorandum. The JFM also includes an assessment of the risks in these forces as measured against the strategy and objectives of JSOP, volume I, and a comparison of the costs of its recommendations with the FYDP.

36 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Finally, the JFM highlights the major force issues to be resolved during the year. In 1969 and 1970 these issues have included the B-1, ABM, and ship-building.

In May each service submits to the Secretary of Defense a Program Objective Memorandum (POM) for each major mission area and support activity in the defense budget. These memoranda express total program requirements in terms of forces, manpower, and costs and must provide a rationale for deviations from the FYDP and the JFM. The Secretary's office no longer issues program documents.

In July, Laird completes the programming cycle by issuing Program Decision Memoranda (PDM) for each budget area. These are based upon the inputs of the JSOP, Joint Force Memorandum, and Program Objective Memorandum and are then reflected in the FYDP. During July and August the Secretary meets with the JCS to resolve any disputes over the PDM. These disputes have mainly centered around a manpower-weapons tradeoff. The JCS have opted for decreasing manpower and putting the limited funds into advanced weaponry. In the FY 1971 and 1972 budget evolutions a compromise has been worked out.¹⁰⁰

The budgetary cycle commences on 30 September, when each service submits its budget to the Secretary. The budgets are supposed to be based on the approved programs resulting from the various decision documents. The service submissions have come within 3 percent of the established ceiling. In FY 1970 Congress authorized \$77.5 billion for defense, and in FY 1971 the service requests amounted to \$77.3 billion.¹⁰¹

After a review of the budget estimates by the Secretary's staff, working with 51 representatives of the Office of Management and Budget, the budget is sent to the Defense Program Review Committee (DPRC). This committee reviews the budget in November and

December. The DPRC made very few changes to the FY 1971 budget but in December 1970 recommended that an additional \$6 billion be added to the FY 1972 budget to maintain troop levels in Europe and the strength of the 6th Fleet. DOD wanted to reduce both of these items to stay within the \$70 billion ceiling. President Nixon ratified the decision when he decided to have a deficit budget.¹⁰²

The Relationship. Laird saw a need to modify the active manager philosophy of McNamara. He felt that his predecessor's approach had led to "overcentralization in decisionmaking." Secretary Laird gives the services broad guidelines and reviews their implementation.¹⁰³

Laird views himself as the Pentagon spokesman within the administration. He is not content merely to accept guidelines from the White House and transmit them to the military. The Secretary participates in making administration policy and challenges those policy assumptions which he feels militate against the best interests of his department.¹⁰⁴

Moreover, Laird adamantly resists the efforts of outside agencies to intervene in the internal affairs of DOD. So far, he has successfully kept the Defense Program Review Committee from deciding how DOD will spend its share of the budgetary pie.¹⁰⁵

Laird also sees himself as DOD's advocate before the Congress and the public. His public statements do not emphasize the waste and inefficiency in the Pentagon. Rather, Laird points out that present defense spending is at "rockbottom."¹⁰⁶

The Secretary perceives the JCS as his primary military advisers in the budget process. He wants to know what their feeling is concerning the defense needs and priorities of the country. Laird respects their professionalism and does not want them to merely rubber

stamp decisions made outside the JCS, nor does he expect the Chiefs not to inform the White House or the Congress when they are concerned about a security issue.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, Laird encourages the JCS to take their case to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Defense Program Review Committee, and the Office of Management and Budget.¹⁰⁸

The present Secretary is desirous of achieving consensus within the Department, especially with the JCS. Therefore, he is willing to bargain, negotiate, and compromise with the Chiefs to achieve their agreement.¹⁰⁹

The JCS of 1970 are willing to perform as team members, provided their professionalism is respected. The Chiefs no longer desire to opt out of the budget process as soon as the service estimates are submitted. The JCS want their opinions considered on every item which they feel is important. They recognize that resources are declining but desire that the fiscal constraints be made explicit at an early stage in the budget process. This enables them to know where they stand and to set priorities.¹¹⁰

The Chiefs see the Secretary as the "defender of defense." They expect him to protect their services from the onslaughts of those who want to reduce defense spending drastically. The JCS feel that Laird should present their viewpoints to the interdepartmental committees or the White House, when it is necessary, and allow them to do so should they feel strongly enough about an issue.¹¹¹

The Secretary-JCS relationship under Laird seems to be as harmonious as the relationship under McNamara was bitter. From all accounts, the Secretary-JCS honeymoon is still going on.

The civil-military relationship appears well balanced. The military voice is heard within the administration and before the Congress, but there is no evidence that military men or military considerations dominate the policy

process. If poor strategic policy does result, it may come as a consequence of a continuation of the tripartite division of the defense budget. The chances of such a division producing a balanced force are infinitesimal.

CONCLUSION

The most salient aspect of the relationship between the Secretary of Defense and the JCS is that it is continually changing. Moreover, the nature of the relationship does not seem to be progressing linearly or changing in any certain direction. Rather, the relationship vacillates in a number of different directions. For example, Laird's relationship with the JCS is more like that of Forrestal than that of McNamara. It seems that at present the experience of the late 1940's is more relevant than the 1960's.

The prime determinant in the relationship appears to be the role perceptions of the Secretary. Within certain minimum legal constraints¹¹² and within certain parameters, tolerated by the White House,¹¹³ the Secretary of Defense is free to determine how much or how little both he and the JCS will do in the budget process. McNamara and Laird operated with the same Chiefs, within the same organizational milieu, and in a similar environment. Yet their relationships with the JCS were quite different. Forrestal and Johnson even operated with the same President, but their relationships were very dissimilar.

The JCS role perceptions may make them unhappy over the part that the Secretary eschews for himself or that he allots to them, but there is little that the Chiefs can do about the situation. The JCS may do somewhat less than the Secretary desires, but it is almost impossible for them to do more or to alter the Secretary's activities. Moreover, if the JCS behavior is completely out of line with the Secretary's expectations or

38 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

if the Chiefs complain too much about their position vis-a-vis the Secretary, there is a real possibility that the violators will be removed. When forced to choose between a Secretary and a Chief, the President invariably sides with the former. Admirals Denfeld and Anderson and General LeMay were dismissed when their behavior deviated too far from the Secretary's norms.¹¹⁴ Eisenhower tolerated deviant behavior on the part of the Chiefs, but he also permitted this throughout his administration.¹¹⁵

A secondary determinant would appear to be the environment. There is no doubt that the activities of the JCS are influenced by the public and congressional mood. In the 1950's and early 1960's, when the public and Congress favored higher levels of defense spending, the JCS refused to operate within administration ceilings, while in the late 1940's and late 1960's, when the public and congressional mood opposed the level of defense spending, the JCS were more cooperative. However, the environment is not nearly as important as the role perception of the Secretary to the nature of the Secretary-JCS relationship. Forrestal and Johnson and McNamara and Laird operated in similar environments.

Despite changing role conceptions and a changing environment, the civil and military elements, as reflected in the Secretary-JCS relationship, have remained well balanced. Although some temporary aberrations have threatened to upset the equilibrium, adjustments by both sides have restored the balance. Despite charges by pro and antimilitary forces throughout the years, there is no evidence that either element has dominated the process for any significant length of time.¹¹⁶

A second important aspect of the relationship is how little the quality of the relationship has affected the "is" or the "ought" dimension. The JCS had a harmonious relationship with Forrestal and a bitter one with Johnson. Yet they

cooperated much more with the latter. The JCS had a high regard for Wilson and were quite bitter about McNamara. Yet they were at least as cooperative with the latter as with the former.

What of the decade of the 1970's? The decade will probably continue to see a tight lid on defense expenditures. The Tentative Fiscal Guidance Memorandum projections through 1977 are somewhat below FY 1972 spending levels.¹¹⁷ If inflation persists and the administration continues to move toward a volunteer army, the amount for weapons procurement will continue to decline in absolute terms.¹¹⁸

Nevertheless, a revival of the inter-service rivalry of the forties and fifties among the JCS does not appear likely. The men who will come to the Chiefs in the 1970's will be of a different breed than the World War II gladiators. Vietnam has not created any heroes, and the Chiefs of the 1970's should have neither the stature nor the desire to repeat the experiences of the forties and fifties.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Professor Lawrence J. Korb did his undergraduate work at The Athenaeum of Ohio, his master's degree work in political science at St. John's University, and earned his Ph.D. in the field from the Graduate School of Public Affairs, State University of New York at Albany. He has taught in the general field of international politics at State University of New York and at the University of Dayton. As a naval flight officer he was on active duty from 1962 to 1966; he served in patrol squadrons ONE and on the staff of Commander Patrol Force 7th Fleet, spending 2½ years in the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia. Lieutenant Commander Korb continues to be active in the Naval Reserve, has lectured at the Naval War College, and is currently a member of the Humanities Department at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

The future Chiefs should be highly professional, with a considerable amount of graduate education. They will have good friends in the other services and will have had a considerable number of joint assignments. Their professionalism and joint service¹¹⁹ will make it difficult for them to stoop to the level of the immediate post-World War II debates in public.¹²⁰

The big unknown will be the Secre-

tary of Defense. The situation would be very different if a William Proxmire rather than a Henry Jackson should succeed Laird. As experience has demonstrated, there has been no consistent progression toward any particular Secretary-JCS relationship. We can hardly project the role to be played by future Secretaries of Defense without first knowing the personality of the men who will hold the office.

FOOTNOTES*

1. Alfred Vagts defines militarism as a condition characterized by the domination of the military man over the civilian, an undue preponderance of military demands, and an emphasis on military considerations, spirit, ideals, and scales of value in the life of the state. Alfred Vagts, *A History of Militarism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), p. 14.

2. Six of the 28 men served both as a service Chief and the Chairman. Of the seven Chairmen of the JCS, only Admiral Radford did not serve as head of his service.

3. Bernard Gordon, "The Military Budget: Congressional Phase," *The Journal of Politics*, November 1961.

4. Data for this study comes from congressional hearings and interviews. A list of interviewees is appended to these footnotes. The author has sought to present their views as accurately as possible and bears the responsibility for any unintentional distortions.

5. This model has been developed by Graham Allison in his "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The American Political Science Review*, September 1969, p. 689-718.

6. Few men are able to step into a job as complex as Secretary of Defense and make major changes immediately, even if they should so desire. Even the dynamic Robert McNamara submitted a budget prepared by the Eisenhower administration to the Congress.

7. The average tenure for the Chairman of the JCS is 3 years and 6 months; an Army Chief of Staff is 2 years and 7 months; a CNO is 2 years and 9 months; an Air Force Chief of Staff is 3 years and 9 months. Secretary Johnson's tenure was 17 months and 21 days, which rounds off to 18 months.

8. Walter Millis, ed., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p. 415. Work on the basic FY 1949 budget was completed before Forrestal took office.

8. SCA, 1950, 17.

10. Millis, p. 418, 500.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, p. 448.

13. Interview.

14. *Ibid.*

15. HCAS, *Selective Service Hearings*, p. 463; and HCA, 1950, I, 210-11.

16. HCA, 1950, IV, 567-75.

17. Interviews.

18. SCA, 1950, 32.

19. For a complete account of the decision, see Paul Hammond, "Supercarriers and B-36 Bombers," in *American Civil-Military Decisions* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1963).

*Because the majority of the footnotes in this paper will come from the annual congressional hearings on the defense budget, a simplified system to reduce the citations to manageable proportions has been used. References to the hearings of the committees will be found in the following form: HCA or HCAS, 1965, I, 57 and SCA, 1965, II, 95. HCA and SCA refer to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees before which the hearings on the defense budget are conducted (HCAS—the House Armed Services Committee), the year refers to the fiscal year for which the money will be appropriated, and the Roman numerals signify the volume number.

40 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

20. The events of the executive phase of the FY 1951 budget were extracted from the testimony of Wilfred McNeil, DOD Comptroller, HCA, 1951, I, 104-06; and Budget Director Frank Pace, HCA, 1951, I, 2659-2664, and an interview with McNeil.

21. Interview.

22. Interview.

23. Interviews. The JCS relationship with Johnson may be characterized as "synthetic harmony."

24. Millis, p. 430.

25. SCA, 1951, 15-16; HCA, 1951, II, 249.

26. SCA, 1951, 73.

27. See Hammond for an excellent discussion of the "Revolt of the Admirals."

28. Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1957), p. 374-99.

29. HCA, 1951, IV, 1739.

30. The fact that Gates was in office for so short a time is unfortunate for this study. Because of early experience in DOD, Gates had a highly satisfactory relationship with the JCS. Hearings, Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, 1961, v. I, p. 734.

31. The components of the "great equation" were military and economic strength. The administration viewed the budgetary process as an exercise in balancing this equation, i.e., equating needed military strength with maximum economic strength. Eisenhower assumed that maximum economic strength rested on the foundation of a balanced budget.

32. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), p. 356.

33. The format for Eisenhower's budget was obtained from interviews with McNeil, Burke, Taylor, and Radford; and Maxwell Taylor, *The Uncertain Trumpet* (New York: Harper, 1959); and Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier* (New York: Harper, 1956).

34. Taylor, p. 82-83.

35. Alain C. Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, *How Much is Enough* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 12-13.

36. Taylor, p. 206.

37. Interview.

38. Congress was dismayed when Eisenhower's FY 1959 budget, submitted about 3 months after Sputnik, amounted to only \$37 billion. HCA, 1959, 353.

39. HCA, 1964, II, 585.

40. HCA, 1954, 317, 470-71.

41. HCA, 1955, 43-45. Wilson and Radford tried to convince the JCS that a sound economy was an aspect of national security and a proper subject for military appraisal.

42. Nathan Twining, *Neither Liberty nor Safety* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966) p. 56.

43. Taylor, p. 78.

44. U.S. Congress, Senate, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, *Hearings on Major Defense Matters*, 86/1, 20 May 1959, p. 206.

45. In a perceptive article, Donald Gmz, "The Bureau of the Budget and Defense Fiscal Policy," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 1959, pointed out that the fact that such detailed decisions were made by civilians was the fault of the JCS. McNeil did consult with the JCS on an individual basis.

46. Interview.

47. Interviews. See also Huntington, p. 443-44; and James Roherty, *Decisions of Robert S. McNamara* (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami, 1970), p. 46-60.

48. Ridgway, p. 102.

49. Interviews. For example, Burke convinced Eisenhower to overrule Wilson on drafting men into the Navy.

50. Interviews.

51. Interviews.

52. Interview. Radford was the only Chairman to play an active role.

53. The JCS invariably criticized the administration's strategic assumptions and division of the budgetary funds before the Congress. In 1959 they put their complaints in writing.

54. Interviews. In fact, Eisenhower kept one of the least cooperative Chiefs, Arleigh Burke, for 6 years.

55. Interview.

56. Their memorandum to Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson in 1959 caused a great deal of controversy.

57. In Eisenhower's 8 years, Congress actually reduced his defense budgets \$2.6 billion.

58. When the JCS complained to the Congress about Eisenhower's strategy in the spring of 1953, the President wrote to the floor manager of the bill that he took full responsibility for the budget and the goals it contemplated. *Congressional Record*, v. XCIV, pt. 6, p. 7817.

59. HCA, 1963, 4.

60. The best source on McNamara's methods is Enthoven and Smith. The format for McNamara's budget procedures is adopted primarily from this book. I also relied on interviews with Taylor, Decker, Anderson, McDonald, McConnell, and Barber. John Creecine, *Defense Budgeting*, and William Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York: Harper, 1964) are also excellent sources.

61. Interview.

62. Interviews.

63. HCA, 1963, II, 4-6.

64. Enthoven and Smith, p. 32.

65. Interview.

66. Interview.

67. Enthoven and Smith, p. 94, call the JSOP the "best example of the unrealistic alternatives provided by the military." Enthoven's office wrote the MPM.

68. HCA, 1960, I, 88. William Niskanen, "The Defense Resources Allocation Process," Stephen Enke, ed., *Defense Management* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1967), p. 10. The PCR's would have added about \$40 billion annually.

69. Enthoven and Smith, p. 56.

70. Interview: OSD official, April 1968, quoted in Creecine, p. 41.

71. Interviews.

72. Interviews.

73. Interviews.

74. Interview.

75. HCA, 1963, II, 4-6; HCA, 1965, I, 304.

76. Roberly, p. 76.

77. Interview.

78. Interview.

79. HCA, 1967, I, 280; SCA, 1967, I, 69.

80. Townsend Hoopes, *The Limits of Intervention* (New York: McKay, 1969), p. 90. This point was disputed by some interviewees, but at least one substantiated it.

81. Phil G. Goulding, *Confirm or Deny* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 168-214.

82. April 1968 interview with an official in the Comptroller's office, quoted in Creecine, p. 51.

83. Interview; HCA, 1965, IV, p. 447-95.

84. Robert S. McNamara, "McNamara Defines His Job," *The New York Times Magazine*, 26 April 1964, p. 108.

85. By the end of 1967, McNamara claimed his methods had saved over \$6 billion; HCA, 1968, 32.

86. HCA, 1963, II, 4-6; Maxwell Taylor, "Post-Vietnam Role of the Military in Foreign Policy," *Air University Review*, July-August 1968, p. 51; National Security Action Memorandum, June 1961.

87. His ideas on this subject are set down in a memorandum from Cyrus Vance, his deputy. It is printed in full in SCA, 1966, 285.

88. General LeMay was the last of the World War II heroes to sit on the JCS. He was retired on 31 January 1965.

89. Robert N. Ginsburgh, "The Challenge to Military Professionalism," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1964, p. 255.

90. Interviews.

91. For an excellent statement of the JCS position, see George Anderson, "Address," National Press Club, Washington, D.C., 4 September 1963. Anderson was the first Chief to graduate from the National War College.

92. Some of the individuals who held this position included Congressmen from the Armed Services and Military Appropriations Committee, former Chiefs Thomas White and Nathan Twining, Secretary of the Army Elvis Stahr, academician John Ries, and Pentagon observers Hanson Baldwin and Clark Mollenhoff.

93. Effective 1 January 1969. It was passed as a rider to the FY 1968 appropriations bill.

94. HCA, 1971, I, 153.

95. Enthoven and Smith, p. 334; Interviews. DOD is caught in a crossfire between public

42 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

and congressional sentiment demanding less spending on defense and inflation pushing costs upward.

96. Laird's budget procedures are outlined in HCA, 1971, III, 480-81.

97. In Nixon's three budgets the Army has received \$67.7 billion, the Navy \$67.8 billion, and the Air Force \$69.9 billion. *Department of Defense Fact Sheet*, February 1971, p. 22; Enthoven and Smith, p. 334-35.

98. Richard M. Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: a New Strategy for Peace*, Report to the Congress, 18 February 1970 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1970), p. 20; Richard M. Nixon, *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Building for Peace*, Report to the Congress, 25 February 1971 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971), p. 228.

99. Interview, DPIC Working Group member, March 1971.

100. *Ibid.*

101. HCA, 1971, I, 159.

102. Interview, DPRC Working Group member.

103. HCA, 1971, I, 153; Enthoven and Smith, p. 335.

104. Interview. Recently Laird intervened to attempt to secure a pay raise for the military in spite of the wage freeze.

105. Interview, DPRC Working Group member.

106. HCA, 1971, I, 162.

107. Interview.

108. Melvin R. Laird, Press Conference, 14 August 1971.

109. *Ibid.* The Tripartite Division of funds is one reflection of the compromises made to date.

110. *Ibid.*

111. *Ibid.*

112. As McNamara's experience has shown, formal legal reorganizations mean very little as far as the Secretary-JCS relationship is concerned.

113. McNamara remarked on several occasions that the Secretary could not remain in office without Presidential support. C.W. Barklund, *Men of the Pentagon* (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 224.

114. Johnson and McNamara were the only Secretaries who were fired, but their demise was brought about by the Korean and Vietnam wars, not their relationships with the Chiefs. For an account of McNamara's demise, see *The Pentagon Papers* (*The New York Times*), (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), p. 510-40.

115. Eisenhower permitted Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey to get away with telling Congress that there were several places where Eisenhower's FY 1958 budget could be cut. HCA, 1958, 5.

116. It should be noted that a balanced relationship does not of itself produce good strategic policy. As Samuel Huntington has pointed out, it may well be that the normal methods of American politics are incapable of producing good strategic policy.

117. Interview, DPRC Working Group member.

118. Personnel costs alone in FY 1972 were over \$40 billion.

119. Unlike the 1940's and 1950's, the services now send their best men to joint assignments, i.e., the Joint Staff. Interview.

120. Several interviewees pointed out to me that it is difficult to disparage a service in which you have good friends, with whom you mix socially. Moreover, defense funds have been declining for 5 years with no public disparagement. The general consensus appears to be that the survival of the military as a viable entity is heavily dependent upon the JCS speaking with one voice.

Interviewees: Adm. George Anderson, USN, 5 September 1968; Arthur W. Barber, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, 2 February 1968; Adm. Arleigh Burke, USN, 6 September 1968; Gen. George Decker, USA, 4 September 1968; Gen. John P. McConnell, USAF, 17 June 1971; Adm. David McDonald, USN, 27 August 1968; Wilfred McNeil, 13 December 1968; G. Warren Nutter, Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), 29 January 1971; Adm. Arthur Radford, USN, 4 September 1968; Robert Sikes, 14 August 1968; Gen. Carl Spaatz, USAF, 5 September 1968; Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, USA, (Ret.), Military Assistant to the President, 4 September 1968; Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, USA, 8 October 1971.

